(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any action on their demands; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*English*]

Indian Students in Republic of Erstwhile Soviet Union

1518. SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI:
SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR:
SHRI RATILAL VARMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian students studying in the newly independent Republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union are facing financial and other hardships; and

(b) if so, the measures being taken by the Government to help them;

(c) whether the matter has been taken up with all these Republics; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. The difficulties are being faced by Indian students in the former USSR as result of the radical economic and political restructuring that has taken place there.

(b) Several steps have been taken including (i) release of US $ 50 p.m. per student already studying in the former USSR against deposit of equivalent rupees in India; (ii) issue of pre-paid ticket advice on Air India against payment in Indian rupees for students wishing to travel to India; (iii) arranging repatriation wherever necessary, as per Government regulations; and (iv) facilitating transit arrangements in Moscow for students in need and affected by civil disturbances as, for example, in Georgia.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. The matter had been taken up during the visit of Foreign Secretary's delegation both to Russia and Ukraine in January 1992. Both Governments have assured that all possible steps would be taken to ameliorate the difficulties being faced by Indian students. The matter has also been taken up by our Embassy in Moscow with the Governments of the newly independent Republics. It is understood that at their meeting on 8 February 1992 the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Independent States of the former Soviet Union decided to reaffirm corresponding agreements of the former USSR with regard to foreign students and begin working out new documents and arrangements.

Edible Oil in Exchange of Foodgrains

1519. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have singed an agreement with the World Food Programme on a commodity exchange mechanism where by India will receive much needed edible oil in exchange of foodgrains;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) the extent to which wheat is proposed to be substituted by the vegetable oil;

(d) the countries with whom such agree-